

# Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP  
Premier



Tuesday, 9 May 2023

## BACKING MORE FAMILIES WITH BETTER ACCESS TO KINDER

More children and families from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds are accessing and attending kindergarten, thanks to council-led outreach programs supported by the Andrews Labor Government.

Premier Daniel Andrews and Minister for Early Childhood and Pre-Prep Ingrid Stitt today visited Springvale Service for Children to receive an update from one of the recipients of 22 CALD Outreach Initiative grants and meet families in the City of Greater Dandenong who have benefitted from the program.

Supporting councils to run engagement activities and employ outreach workers, grants totalling \$3.5 million have backed children and families from CALD backgrounds to access and attend kindergarten, connect with other early childhood supports and transition successfully to primary school.

The CALD Outreach Initiative started in eight local councils in 2021 and has already supported more than 2,500 children to enrol in and attend kindergarten. With more local councils now joining the program, it will see more children from diverse backgrounds benefit from the Labor Government's \$14 billion Best Start, Best life reforms.

CALD outreach teams work across communities to help CALD families access early childhood services in their local area, including visiting playgroups, libraries and community hubs, assisting families with kindergarten enrolment, organising information sessions and working with educators to address attendance barriers.

The Municipal Association of Victoria is receiving funding to support council-led outreach programs and activities, and share key learnings and insights with all councils state-wide.

A further \$800,000 in funding over two years is also supporting bicultural workers from the Brotherhood of St Laurence to deliver targeted outreach to CALD families living in public housing in the cities of Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Moonee Valley and Yarra through the Family Learning Support Program.

Since 2020, the program has worked with families from Eritrean, Ethiopian, Vietnamese, Somali, Pakistani, Turkish, Sudanese and Pacific Islander backgrounds, with a full suite of translated resources and free interpreters available to support Victoria's multicultural communities to engage with kindergarten.

For more information visit [vic.gov.au/kinder/translations](https://vic.gov.au/kinder/translations) or [vic.gov.au/use-interpretor-early-childhood-education-services](https://vic.gov.au/use-interpretor-early-childhood-education-services).

### Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

*"Children from multicultural communities – like every child – have so much to gain from two years of kindergarten, and we're giving families from diverse backgrounds access to the very best early childhood education."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Early Childhood and Pre-Prep Ingrid Stitt

*"We're ensuring that families from every background have the resources and support they need to ensure their kids get the most out of early education – delivering more Victorian kids the best start in life."*

**CALD Outreach Initiative grant recipients are:**

- Banyule City Council
- Brimbank City Council
- Casey City Council
- Darebin City Council
- Greater Bendigo City Council
- Greater Dandenong City Council
- Greater Geelong City Council
- Hobsons Bay City Council
- Hume City Council
- Maribyrnong City Council
- Maroondah City Council
- Melbourne City Council
- Melton City Council
- Merri-bek City Council
- Mildura Rural City Council
- Monash City Council
- Moonee Valley City Council
- Moorabool Shire Council
- Whittlesea City Council
- Wyndham City Council
- Yarra City Council
- Yarra Ranges Shire Council

\* Greater Shepparton City Council and Cardinia Shire Council will also have a CALD outreach worker in place until mid-2023, supported by funding received through previous grants.